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THE CONCRETE MUSSEL
by
Palmer Thompson

CAST

MARK TRAIL

SCOTTY

PROFESSOR HAWTHORNE

PABLO MARTINEZ

DIRK CLOVIS

NARRATOR: On the shores of Southern California near the Mexican border lies the wide shallow bay of San Benito. Across the ~~MMMMM~~ mouth of the bay is a half finished concrete sea wall, still in the process of construction. It is night and the silence is broken only by the steady pounding of the surf against the shore.

(SURF ON SHORE)

Suddenly another sound is heard, the engine of an old fishing boat slowly chugging it's way across the bay.

(OFF BOAT ENGINE FADING ON)

From the shadows, east on the concrete wall by the construction equipment, a man named Dirk Clovis emerges. He waits impatiently for the arrival of the boat.

(BOAT ENGINE ON FULL)

(CUT BOAT ENGINE)

DIRK: (UP) Pablo?

PABLO: (OFF, SLIGHT MEXICAN ACCENT) Eet ees me, Dirk. Hop on beard.

DIRK: (UP) Swing her around a little more.

PABLO: (OFF) Right.

(ENGINE ON BRIEFLY)

(CUT ENGINE)

DIRK: (UP) Okay, Pablo.

(JUMP TO BOAT DECK)

DIRK: How's it going?

PABLO: Not so bad, not so good.

DIRK: What kind of an answer is that?

PABLO: The only one I can give.

DIRK: Isn't that bird brained bird lover ready to quit yet?

PABLO: He ees a persistant man thees Professor Hawthorne.
He love hees birds very much.

DIRK: That love is costing us a fortune. I could handle
thirty to fifty wetbacks a week at a hundred bucks a
head if we could use this bay.

PABLO: Don't get mad at me. I do everything you say. Already
the job is ten weeks behind schedule and you know this
concrete is so full of sand she don't stand up more
than one or two year against the surf.

DIRK: Great, but we can't wait that long. He's got to run
out of dough, he's got to abandon this job.

PABLO: I theenk maybe he's be pretty close to it.

DIRK: What do you mean?

PABLO: He send for feller to come down and help him. Feller
who belongX to that bird society he's head of. I theenk
he's plenty worried he don't have enough money to
finish job.

DIRK: When's he coming? Who is he.

PABLO: He come tomorrow morning. Professor he already be
in Los Altos to meet him. His name is Mark Trail.

DIRK: Mark Trail!

PABLO: You know heem?

DIRK: By reputation. He's a big time nature lover. Goes
around saving birds and bees.

PABLO: (LAUGH) Birds and bees. That's funny.

DIRK: Don't kid yourself. He's no jerk head like this
absent minded professor.

PABLO: You think he mean trouble for us.

DIRK: I know he does. You won't get away with any of the rawstuff you've been pulling for sabotage. No more sand in the gears and practically smashing the machines with hammers.

PABLO: Ees not so good, hah?

DIRK: You get the idea. With Trail on the job they may be able to finish this bird sanctuary and that means you and I go out of the alien smuggling business permently.

PABLO: Thas bad, but maybe Trail he don't get on the job, hah.

DIRK: You got any ideas?

PABLO: Lot's of things can happen to busybody on construction job like this.

DIRK: That's the kind of talk I like, Pablo.

PABLO: Maybe they happen even before he get here.

DIRK: What do you mean?

PABLO: Well, I have to take the boat to Los Altos tomorrow Pick up the Professor and this Mark Trail feller. Lot's of water between Los Altos and here and she's plenty deep. Man could fall over and drown. Say a man whose name is Mark Trail.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(WATER LAPPING AGAINST DOCK)

(CRY OF SEA GULLS)

PROF; Rally, Mark, it's most upsetting, most distressing, so encouraging.

MARK: What, Professor Hawthorne.

SCOTTY: I don't get it.

PROF: Don't get what my boy. What were you supposed to get. Anything on this dock, I don't.....

MARK: What, Scotty meant Professor is that your statement is sort of confusing.

PROF: Dear me!. Confusing, how?

SCOTTY: Well being distressed and encouraged, Professor, that's....

PROF: Oh, Bless me, so it is confusing. I meant I'm encouraged about the Birds, already they're seeking sanctuary in that portion of the bay that's been calmed by the sea wall. I've counted twenty two different species of migratory birds. This will be a most salutary step toward the conservation of our wild feathered fowl.. In fact I've estimated that.....

MARK: Professor, what about the distressed part? That's what Scotty and I are interested in, remember.

PROF: Oh, so you are. That's right. The construction. It just isn't proceeding right. Things happen. Delays, Delays, delays. I'm afraid the Society for the Protection and Preservation of Migratory Birds will run# out of money, and then....well we'll have to give up this whole project.

MARK: Professor, what kind of delays?

PROF: Delays? Bless me, what delays?

SCOTTY: Mark maybe you'd better talk to the man who's in charge of actual# construction.

PROF: That's a splendid idea, young man. He'd know a lot more about it, dear me he would.

MARK: Look, Professor, I know it's a long way from ornithology, but just try one answer.

PROF: Yes?

(OFF BOAT FADING ON)

MARK: Are they natural delays, that is bad weather something like that or do you suspect some kind of sabotage?

PROF: Sabotage?

PABLO: (OFF) Hallo, Professor.

(BOAT ENGINE ON IDLING)

PROF: Eh?

SCOTTY: The man in the boat, Professor. He's calling you.

PROF: OH. Pablo.

PABLO: (OFF) I come along side in a second, Professor.

MARK: Who is he?

PROF: Pablo Martinez, the construction foreman.

MARK: Good. Perhaps I can get some information from him.

PROF: From Pablo? Why blees me, of course you can. He knows everything. When we get on board you talk to him.

MARK: I'll do that as soon as we get under way. Maybe he can give me some idea of what we're up against down here.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(BOAT ENGINE IN BACKGROUND)

SCOTTY: I must say, Mark that the professor isn't very clear in his conservation.

MARK: I know, Scotty. He's the cartoonists delight. The typical absentminded Professor. All wrapped up in ornithology. Nothing else exists.

SCOTTY: You going to talk to that, Martinez.

MARK: Yes I may as well.....oh, doggone it.

SCOTTY: What's the matter?

MARK: Got my Jacket caught in this old tuna hook.

SCOTTY: Stick you?

MARK: No. Just the cloth. Let me have your hunting knife, Scotty. I'll work it out.

SCOTTY: Here.

MARK: Thanks.

SCOTTY: Some hook, I.....Hey, look Mark over there in the water. A sharks fin.

MARK: Yes. I see.

SCOTTY: Gosh he's a big one.

MARK: Lot of them in these waters. Suppose you go down and ask Martinez to come up here while I trya and work this hook out. The professor can take the wheel.

SCOTTY: Okay, Mark, but I'd better stay with him or he'll be following the trail of some sea gull.

MARK: All right, stay with him, but get going now.

SCOTTY: On my way.

(FOOTSTEPS ON DECK)

SCOTTY: Mr. Martinez.

PABLO: (FADE ON) Yes, sonny.

SCOTTY: Mark would like to talk to you. The professor and I can take the wheel.

PABLO: Sure theeng. If is all right with the professor.

PROF: Eh? What's all right.

PABLO: Mr. Trail he wish to talk to me.

PROF: OF course, bless me, go right ahead, Pablo.

(FOOTSTEPS FADE OFF)

SCOTTY: I'll stand by the wheel with you, Professor.

PROF: Certainly, Scotty. Most interesting.

SCOTTY: What is professor?

PROF: This article in the Ornithological Review concerning the nesting habits of the bitten. Look at this Illustration it.....

SCOTTY: Professor, I'll admit that I.....

(OFF MIKE# YELL)

(OFF MIKE SPLASH)

SCOTTY: What.....?

PABLO: (OFF) Professor, Sonny.....Mr. Trail he fall in the Water.

PROF: Good heavens, A life preserver, get.....

SCOTTY: Professor, Look! That shark's fin.

PROF: Bless me! It's diving.

SCOTTY: Mark! Mark! The shark! He's heading for you,
Swim for it. MARK! Swim for it!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

NARRATOR: As Scotty shouts his frenzied warning the huge maneating shark turns over on it's back, it's white belly showing clearly through the blue water, not more than twenty yards away from Mark Trail. Will Mark Trail escape the almost certain death of those slashing teeth. We'll learn in a moment and now.....(COMMERCIAL)

NARRATOR: Now back to Mark Trail. Professor Hawthorne, a world famed authority on birds, has been in charge of constructing a ~~sea wall~~ breakwater across San Benito bay in Southern California, so that the bay will be transformed into a migratory bird sanctuary. Encountering construction difficulties he has called on Mark Trail and Scotty to help him. While going by boat to the construction camp at San Benito, Mark fell overboard, a shark following the boat immediately jumped to attack while Professor Hawthorne and Scotty look on helplessly.

(WATER SPLASHING)

(BOAT ENGINE IN BG)

SCOTTY: Professor, Look. The shark. He's turned Belly up.

PROF: Pablo! Do something, quick.

PABLO: Stop the engine. I take the small boat. TRY to get to heem.

SCOTTY: Swim faster, Mark. Faster.

PROF: Look! He's not swimming for the boat.

SCOTTY: He's diving under water. Toward the shark.

PABLO: He's crazy.

(TERRIFIC WATER CHURNING)

PROF: What is it!

SCOTTY: I can't see anything!

PABLO: The water bubble like two devils.

SCOTTY: Look, Professo.

PROF: Blood.

PABLO: Madre mia!

SCOTTY: Oh, no...no it can't be.

PROF: The water's quieting down.

SCOTTY: The blood.

PROF: You can't see anything for it.

PABLO: I take the small boat row over there. Maybe I find something.

(FOOTSTEPS FADE)

SCOTTY: Mark.....no

PROF: Easy, Scotty, it....

SCOTTY: Leave me alone.

PROF: Scotty.....

SCOTTY: Leave me alone, can't you! I just....want to be....alone.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(WAVES LAPPING AGAINST BOAT)

SCOTTY: (SOBBING) Mark. Mark.

(WATER SPLASHING)

(HAND SLAPPED ON DECK)

MARK: (SLIGHTLY OFF, LOW) Scotty.

SCOTTY: Wha.....Ma.....

MARK: (LOW) No, Scotty. Quiet!

SCOTTY: But Mark...you....the blood....

MARK: Where's Martinez? The professor?

SCOTTY: Martinez is out in the row boat looking for.....

MARK: What's left of me?

SCOTTY: The professor's watching him.

MARK: Give me a hand up on deck. and quiet about it.

(MARK CLIMBS ABOARD)

SCOTTY: But how....what.....

MARK: Later, Scotty. Right now help me slip down into the cabin without being seen.

SCOTTY: But.....

MARK: When Martinez comes back you can play the sorrow big run down into the cabin and close the door. They'll

MARK: (CONTINUED) leave you alone with your grief then
I'll tell you what happened.

SCOTTY: I don't.....

MARK: And remember Scotty. I'm dead to every one but you.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(LAPPING OF WAVES)

(ROW BOAT BUMPS INTO SIDE OF MOTORBOAT)

PABLO: Here, Profosseor. Take the line while I climb
aboard.

PROF: All right, Pablo.

(PABLO CLIMBS ABOARD)

PABLO: I'll tie him up, Professor.

PROF: Pablo, did you.....

PABLO: Nothing, just like rowing on a sea of blood. The
shark he.....welll....

PROF: Horrible.

PABLO: Where is the boy.

PROF: He went....oh, Scotty.

SCOTTY: I heard.

PABLO: I am sorry, Sonny.

PROF: Scotty, you must....

SCOTTY: Don't say anything.....just don't say anything.

(RUNNING FOOTSTEPS FADE OFF)

PROF: Scotty, you.....

(OFF HATCH DOOR SLAMS)

PABLO: Let him go Professor. Ees better he is left alone
to cry himself out. Ees horrbile thing to have a
friend die. I feel terrible this happen on my boat.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

MARK: Well, Scotty?

SCOTTY: They're both sitting by the wheel. Not talking.

MARK: Good. Then we can talk, but keep your eye on them. I want to have plenty of time to slip under this bunk if one of them should come up to sympathize with you in your grief.

SCOTTY: I thought I did a pretty good job of acting there.

MARK: Excellent, Scotty. I almost shed a tear.

SCOTTY: Aw cut it, Mark. Now tell me.....

MARK: I will, Scotty. First to paraphrase a popular song I didn't slip, I didn't fall, I was pushed.

SCOTTY: Martinez?

MARK: Yes, though I couldn't prove it unless you or the Professor saw it.

SCOTTY: No, we were looking at some bird book when it happened... But the shark how did you.....

MARK: Luck and a good memory.

SCOTTY: Luck, memory?

MARK: Yes. The luck came when I was pushed. I instinctively grabbed for something, got a hold of a long pole, a fish gaff, it went over with me.

SCOTTY: But.....

MARK: Then when the shark came for me, I remembered my G.I. days in the south Pacific, how the natives there would go after a shark armed with just a long pole and a knife, using themselves as bait.

SCOTTY: Themselves, bait.

MARK: Yes, when the shark turned over for the kill, they'd take the long pole, ram it down his throat so he couldn't

MARK: (CONTINUED) close he jaw, and then use the knife for the kill.

SCOTTY: They do that, really?

MARK: I've seen them. Well I had your knife, the long pole and there was no chance of my making the boat so I can now tell you from personal experiance, which I have no desire to have again, that it works.

SCOTTY: Gosh, Mark.....I.....

MARK: That's the way I feel to. I came up on the other side of ##### the boat and saw the canche to play dead so that's what I'm going to do until we find out exactly what Pablo's game is.

SCOTTY: But the professor, why not tell him.

MARK: Too absent minded. He might let it slip.

SCOTTY: I get you, Mark, but what do I do.

MARK: Just what you have been doing. Grief and sorrow over my demise.

SCOTTY: Okay.

MARK: Don't be so gleeful about it, and above all don't overdo it. Remember the best actors underplay.

SCOTTY: Don't worry about me, Mark.

MARK: And keep you eyes and ears open for whatever you can see or hear. I'll do the same and get in touch with you when we've got some idea of what Senor Pablo Martinez is up to.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(WAVES LAPPING AGAINST DOCK)

(FOOTSTEPS FADE ON)

PABLO; Professor.

PROFE Yes, Pablo.

PABLO: The boat she's tied up. Is there anything I can....

PROF: No, Pablo. I'll report it to the authorities.

PABLO: Yes. Professor. I'm sorry, Sonny.

SCOTTY: That's won't bring him back.

PROF: Scotty, Pablo just means.....

PABLO: It's all right, Professor. I understand how the boy feels.

SCOTTY: I...I don't no what I'm saying.....with Mark....

PROF: Get hold of yourself, Scotty.

SCOTTY: I' will....just.....I will.

PABLO: Professor.

PROF: Yes.

PABLO: I theenk after supper I take the boat and go out to the sea wall. The work she must go on, and I wish to see how much they have done today with both of us away.

PROF: Do whatever you wish, Pablo.

PABLO: All right, Professor. Good night. Good night, young one.

(FOOTSTEPS FADE OFF)

SCOTTY: I guess we may as well go, Professor.

PROF: Eh?

SCOTTY: You were going to report.....well.....

PROF: That's right, I was, but.....

SCOTTY: But what, Professor?

PROF: Let's go into the office on the dock, Scotty. There's a phone there.

SCOTTY: All right, Professor. Let's go.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(PICK UP PHONE)

(DIAL OPERATOR)

PROF: Hello? Operator, I want.....no.....no...never mind.

(PHONE DOWN)

SCOTTY: What's the matter, Professor.

PROF: I've been thinking Scotty.

SCOTTY: Thinking?

PROF: Yes, and not about birds, but about Mark's death.

SCOTTY: I don't understand.

PROF: Bless me, Scotty. How shall I report it? As an accident or murder.

SCOTTY: Murder!

PROF: Yes. The excitement befogged my mind and yours also.

SCOTTY: Professor you must....

PROF: Look at it logically. Mark was certainly no fool, no clumsy oaf and yet he fell off the boat. But who says so, Martinez.

SCOTTY: Sure, doesn't that.....

PROF: He could have been pushed and if that's so there's only one man who could have done it.

SCOTTY: Look, Professor, I'm sure you're wrong. There's no reason for him to do it.

PROF: How do we know?

SCOTTY: But you can't make an accusation like that. Think of fuss it would stir up, it would ruin.....I mean well there's no basis for it.

PROF: Perhaps not, Scotty, but I think we should make sure. I'm going back to the boat. I want to examine the spot where Mark went overboard.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PROF: Look at this Scotty, the railing's low and.....

SCOTTY: Sure, Professor, anyone could fall over it even Mark.

PROF: No, Scotty. I can't agree with that. Look where it hit's my legs. Just above the knees.

SCOTTY: Mark's taller than you.

PROF: Not too much so. You see, even if I slipped, the rail would give me enough leverage to regain my balance. It would do the same for Mark, unless he was pushed, and I think he was.

SCOTTY: But.....

PROF: I'm going to report this as murder and have Martinez....

SCOTTY: All right, Professor. You win.

PROF: What?

SCOTTY: Come down in the cabin with me.

PROF: Cabin, I don't.....

SCOTTY: Please, Professor, follow me.

(FOOTSTEPS)

(FOOTSTEPS DOWN STAIRS)

PROF: What are you getting at, Scotty?

SCOTTY: You'll see, Professor. All right, Mark. Come on out.

PROF: Mark!

SCOTTY: Yes. He's alive and in that closet under the bunk bed. Mark.

PROF: Scotty do you feel all right.

SCOTTY: Of course I do, I'll open the door and show you.

(CLOSET DOOR OPEN)

SCOTTY: Mark come on.....he's gone.

PROF: Scotty, you'd better.....

SCOTTY: Look, Professor, I know what you're thinking but Marks alive, I helped him on board, I saw him hide under this bunk.

PROF: Sure you did, Scotty.

SCOTTY: Professor, I'm not off my trolley. If you need more proof I'll tell you your suspicions were right. Mark was pushed. He told me so himself.

PROF: But the shark, the blood....

SCOTTY: Mark, can tell you about that himself. But the big thing is he wanted to play dead to find out why Martinez did it. If you reported it as murder it would spoil the whole plan.

PROF: Scotty are you sure you're not.....

SCOTTY: Believe me, Professor, would I be talking as calm as this if I didn't know Mark was alive.

PROF: But why not tell me.

SCOTTY: He was afraid you might let it slip, you're well.....

PROF: The absent minded professor.

SCOTTY: Something like that, now.....Shhh.

PROF: What.

SCOTTY: Listen.

(WAY OFF FOOTSTEPS FADE ON)

(FOOTSTEPS ON CLOSE)

PROF: Martinez.

SCOTTY: Yeah.

(FOOTSTEPS ON DECK OVERHEAD)

PROF: He came aboard.

SCOTTY: Listen. He's casting off the lines.

PROF: What.....

SCOTTY: We'd better lay low, keep quiet and hope for the best.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

(BOAT ENGINE IN BG)

(CUT BOAT ENGINE)

(OFF ROAR OF SURF)

(ON LAPPING OF WAVES AGAINST BOAT)

PABLO: (UP) Dirk.

DIRK: (OFF) Hold her steady, Pablo. I'll jump on deck.

(THUMP ON DECK)

PABLO: Ees pretty nice night, hah, Dirk?

DIRK: Maybe. What about this Mark Trail guy? Did you see him.

PABLO: Oh, sure.

DIRK: What kind of a cookie is he?

PABLO: You use the wrong word. Was he.

DIRK: Was? You've taken care of him already.

PABLO: Yes, so easy. All the cards were in our favor. One little push....overboard...

DIRK: He could certainly swim, couldn't...

PABLO: I never find out. The shark he swim faster

DIRK: Shark?

PABLO: There was one in the water. My friend and your friend. Now with ~~the~~ this Trail out of the way we really go to work and ruin this job.

DIRK: Nice work, Pablo. We'll be back in the alien smuggling business in no time.

PABLO: I think you're right, now....

(OFF MIKE CHAIR SCUFFLE)

DIRK: What was that?

PABLO: I don't know. She sound like she come from the cabin.

DIRK: Did you bring.....

PABLO: Shut up. You have your gun?

DIRK: Yeah.

PABLO: Cover the Cabin door while I open him and flash in this light.

DIRK: Right.

(OPEN DOOR)

PABLO: Well, well.

DIRK: What is it, Pablo.

PABLO: We have company, Dirk. Professor Hawthorne and the so sad little friend of Mark Trail.

PROF: (OFF) Martinez, you're a.....

PABLO: Now, Professor say nothing you be sorry for. I think you better come up on the deck. Keep them covered, Dirk.

DIRK: Come on up both of you.

(FOOTSTEPS ON DECK)

PABLO: Eet looks like they make a little problem for us, eh Dirk.

DIRK: Do you think they heard?

PABLO: Does it make a difference when they see you with the gun.

PROF: We heard everything you murdering.....

PABLO: Such language, Professor.

SCOTTY: You pushed, Mark, you.....

DIRK: Shut up, kid. Let's stop sparring, Pablo. What do we do with them?

PABLO: I give this some thought and I have a most ingenious idea. All right. Up on the concret sea wall, both of you. Keep them covered Dirk Start climbing.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

PABLO: So. Now we are all on the wall.

PROF: Why don't you shot and be done with it.

PABLO: Nothing as crude as that, Professor. Dirk guied them over to those wooden forms.

DIRK: Move.

(FOOTSTEPS)

(FOOTSTEPS STOP)

PABLO: You see, Professor. The forms are made for tomorrows work. And this concrete mixer here, she is filled. With a very bad grade of concrete. Too much sand. not enough solid.

SCOTTY: What are you going to do.

PABLO: Add the solid, you and the professor. Then though the rest of this wall may crumble in two years this part should stand a little longer.

PRFO: You wouldn't....

PABLO: Why not. It is a simple way of disposing of you.... forever. Watch them ~~die~~. I'll start the concrete mixer, then we'll place them in the forms and pour the concrete over them alive.

MUSIC: STING

NARRATOR: Scotty and the Professor facing a horrible death at the hands of the sadistic Pablo Martinez. Will they escape and where is Mark Trail. We'll learn in a moment, but first.....(COMMERCIAL)

NARRATOR: Now back to Mark Trail. Professor Hawthorne and Scotty face death at the hands of the sadistic Pablo Martinez. As Pablo's companion Dirk Clovis holds a gun on them, Pablo speaks.

PABLO: This, Professor is a wonderful concrete mixer. In it already are the sand and the cement. I turn this wheel and the water pours in.

(WATER RUSHING IN TANK)

DIRK: Hurry it up Pablo.

PABLO: What a thin to say. I'm sure our friends are not in a hurry.

SCOTTY: You won't get away with this.

PABLO: Such an original thought. I think we have enough water.

(WATER OFF)

PABLO: It will take a few minutes to mix, but I'm sure you can wait for you concrete shower.

MARK: (FADING ON) I don't think they'll take it, Pablo.

PABLO: Mark Trail!

DIRK: What?

PABLO: Santa Maria, a ghost!

SCOTTY: Professor, Come on. The guy with the gun.

DIRK: Ghost, eh. Bullet's will.....

(SHOT)

PROF: I got him, Scotty.

DIRK: Let go, I'll....

SCOTTY: No you don't.

(SCUFFLE)

(BOLW ON HEAD)

PROF: Pretty good for a professor, eh Scotty.

PABLO: Madre mia! Go away. Go away. You are dead.

MARK: I almost wish I were, # so you could be charge with murder.

PABLO: ~~You!~~ No! Don't touch me. You are dead. I do it myself. The shark.

MARK: Cover him with that gun, Professor. Though I don't think we'll have any trouble taking him back to jail.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

MARK: Well, Professor with those two in jail your work should proceed without any delays.

PROF: I know, Mark, but it won't make much difference. We may just as well stop the job.

SCOTTY: What are you talking about, Professor.

MARK: I think I know Scotty. You mean the sand in the cement. The fact that the wall won't stand up for more than a year or two.

PROF: That's right. Even though they lost, they won, because we haven't got enough money to build that whole wall again.

MARK: You don't have to professor.

PROF: What?

MARK: All you have to do is use some mussel.

SCOTTY: Muscle, Mark.

MARK: Not the # one you mean, Scotty. You see professor when I left that hiding place under the bunk I went out to examine the wall and the construction equipment for evidence of sabotage.

PROF: And you found it, but what's this about mussel.

Mark: I'm talking about the lowly form of sea life known as the mussel.

SCOTTY: I don't get it mark.

MARK: Mussel M-u-s-s-e-l. It's used in strenthening a lot of under water concrete construction. What happens is that boat loads of mussels are dumped against the concrete. They adhere to the concrete like barnacles to a boat and in doing so they strengthen the concrete to two or three times it's normal cracking point.

PROF: Bless me, You're right, Mark.

MARK: So using them, at a fraction of the cost of rebuilding the wall will give you a bird sanctuary in this bay that will last for several lifetimes. And I don't mean one as short as you thought I had out there on that boat.

MUSIC: CURTAIN